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Hanging by a thread

The Fragile state of Women's Rights in a Taliban-Controlled Afghanistan

The Taliban have been steadily expanding their territory in Afghanistan over the last decade, which ensured that the future of Afghan women remained uncertain. Things escalated when the Afghan President Ashraf Ghani fled the country and the Taliban ceased control of Kabul, the capital.

Why the fear?

This is not the first time the Taliban terrorised Afghanistan and its people. The Taliban first emerged in the early 1990s in the northern Pakistan, following the withdrawal of Soviet Troops from Afghanistan. The promise made by them is to restore peace and security to Pashtun areas and implement their own version of Sharia (Islamic Law), once they are in power.

Their interpretation of Sharia law is extremely strict - such as public executions of convicted murderers and adulterers, and amputations for those found guilty of theft. Men were required to grow beards and women had to wear the all-covering burka. They even banned television, music and cinema, and disapproved of girls aged 10 and over going to school.

Can we trust the Taliban on women's rights?

This has been the question of journalists in the recent years. The honest answer would be - "It doesn't matter." The Taliban have a public spokesperson now and they are active on social media platforms such as Twitter, but there is nothing much different from back then and now.

No matter how gentle the Taliban speak about Afghani Women's Rights, there is a major disconnect between what they are saying on social media, TV Interviews and what is happening on the ground. Local Taliban Commanders have been closing girls' schools entirely, even the primary schools.

What happened when the Taliban were in power before?

Afghan people have first hand experience on how the Taliban treat their women, and it is absolutely inhumane and rearward. They banned almost all education for women and girls, imposed extreme forms of punishments including but not limited to - amputation, public stoning, public lashing. They confined the women to their homes unless they were escorted by a male member of their family, which denies the access to at least take a simple private walk.

So what about the Women's rights there?

If anything is clear, it is that the Taliban won't respect Women's rights unless there is an incredible pressure on them by the countries of the world. But unfortunately that is an odd possibility considering the fact that if any country is going to do something about the situation, it would have done it by now. In my opinion, the leaders of the various countries that got the means to do something about this situation are too busy spinning the wheels of politics they are willing to forget their humanity. They need to wake up right now and take action regarding this situation, before Afghanistan and its people are scarred permanently.

Sources: [Human Rights Watch](#), [BBC](#).